

Testimony on LD 2007: An Act to Advance Self-determination for Wabanaki Nations

Xavier Botana, Advocacy Advisor [IntWork](#) and Stefanie Trice Gill, Founder

Honorable Chairs: Senator Carney and Representative Moonen and distinguished members of the Committee on Judiciary, my name is Xavier Botana. I am the advocacy adviser for IntWork, a search firm located in Westbrook that helps Maine companies diversify their workforce by connecting them with qualified diverse individuals who want to live and work in Maine. IntWork is a small business today, but its roots are in the nonprofit world. IntWork was born out of a commitment to empowering individuals to achieve their full potential and, in doing so, aiding their communities to grow and thrive.

I am writing to express IntWork's support for LD 2007.

I would like to commend the lead sponsors, Speaker Talbot Ross and Senate President Jackson and the large number of sponsors for their commitment to doing the right thing for Maine's indigenous tribes: the Pasamaquoddy, Penobscot, Maliseet and Mi'kmaq.

While it may seem out of place for a search firm specializing in helping foreign trained professionals and other candidates from traditionally underrepresented communities to thrive to take an interest in this legislation. However, as an organization with roots in community resilience and overcoming barriers we have a strong affinity for the struggle of Maine's indigenous tribes and nations to achieve self-determination and their full potential.

The bill goes a long way to achieving this through changes to the 1980 Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act and restore back to the tribes many of the rights, privileges, powers, duties and immunities provided to other federally recognized Indian tribes within the United States. These powers, duties and immunities were restricted by the Maine Implementing Act. Ultimately, passage of LD 2007 will provide sovereignty to the nations and tribes over their lands, including their jurisdictional authority in those lands.

IntWork, a Maine based company is proud to stand as an ally to the people of the Wabanaki Confederacy in their quest to achieve full standing enshrined in US law and regain sovereignty that is four hundred years in the making. We ask that you vote "ought pass" to this Act.